244

GROUND NUTS. Only the subterranean varieties of ground nuts, or peanuts, are found in Laos. The inhabitants call this plant "Mak-Thoua-Dine," which means, literally, Fruit of the ground bean. Peanuts are not used for their oil, but are eaten boiled, roasted or with certain pastries in which they are incorporated. They are fed to convalescents as a tonic and restorative, doubtless because of their high nitrogen content.

245

COCONUT AND SUGAR PALMS. The former is called "Kok-Mak-Phao" and its fruit is called "Mak-Phao." The second is called "Kok-Mak-Tane" and its fruit the "Mak-Tane." The sugar extracted from the "Mak-Tane" is called "Nam-Tane."

These two trees are cultivated almost everywhere in the environs of villages.

Coconuts are consumed on the spot, either fresh or dried. In the latter case their meat is used to make an edible oil which is quite good when newly made, or else it is shredded and then used to make a kind of sugar cream. Coconut meat is one of the constituents of carry.

The number of coconut palms in Laos is not great enough [368] to provide for local needs and still leave any over for export of their pulp, which is known commercially as copra. Sugar palms are used only for the needs of the local population. The sugar which they yield is whiter than cane sugar as extracted by the Laotians, and so the natives give the name of "Nam-Tane" to the crystallized European and Chinese sugar, because of its color, and never apply to it the name "Nam-Oi," which designates their black cane sugar.

249
276

BETEL PALMS. Betel palms are grown wherever the altitude permits, and are even found at heights greater than eight hundred meters. [Illustration alongside text here] The betel palm, which is called "Kok-Mak," produces the "Mak" nut with the veined meat which enters into the composition of the national masticatory together with betel, lime, etc.

[348]

When it reaches maturity the betel nut is picked and prepared in two different ways in order to be either consumed on the spot or transported to parts of the country which have none. There is even a small export trade, but so slight that we need only mention it.

It may be preserved whole after the floss envelope from which it is extracted has been dried, or else it may be cut up into [369] thin